

WHY WIN AWAY—

IF POINTS ARE DROPPED AT HOME?

LUTON'S FAILURE.

By Crusader.

CRYSTAL PALACE 2
LUTON TOWN 1

LUTON.—Harford; Kingham, Smith; Gale, McGinnigle, Fraser; M'Nestry, Armstrong, Rennie, Yardley Bryce.

PALACE.—Callender; Crilly, Charlton; Divers, Wilde, Greener; Harry, Turner, Simpson, Butler, Clarke.

Referee.—Mr. J. M. Wiltshire, Sherbourne.

ONCE more LUTON TOWN disappointed a good crowd at home on Saturday when they were beaten by CRYSTAL PALACE. Many reasons have been advanced, the most popular being that Clark should have been retained at centre-half, and a good deal of feeling has been expressed against those responsible for the selection of the team for that reason. Personally, I am inclined to agree that Clark should have been played, but not merely because of the wonderful game he played against Brentford. If one considers it from that aspect alone, McGinnigle had real claims to be restored, since he had played well in the Christmas games against Torquay, and in preceding matches. Actually, I have thought, in spite of the improvement shown in McGinnigle, that Gale should never have been dropped from the pivotal position, even for Cup-ties. Against that, however, one must have some respect for the opinion of experienced men, who felt that it was asking a great deal of a youngster to push him hard at the very threshold of his career.

THE CENTE-HALF TROUBLE.

But to return to the Clark controversy. My reasons for preferring Clark would have had less to do with the remarkable exhibition he gave at Brentford than with the quality of the opposition, and I would have given him the further game solely because he was the type of player to place in the field against the Palace attack. He has done well against such methods as the Palace employ, and without any disparagement of the skill of McGinnigle, Clark is a player who impresses his personality upon the oppo-

sition, and commands a lot of respect. It is not the custom, however, for selectors to consider the style of the opposition so much as the merits of their own players in the last four or five games. That is why McGinnigle was preferred. It was felt that it was only just that he should be restored, since he lost his place in one match merely through injury. I was sorry that a section of the crowd seemed inclined to barrack the Scot. He has done much better, I know, but was chosen, played, and did his best.

CALLENDER'S DAY.

And if one analyses the game it can be fearlessly said that the Town should have won handsomely on the run of the play. They were the more consistently aggressive team, although the Palace were far more dangerous at certain periods, notably immediately after their first goal and in the early stages of the second half. The test of the amount of pressure, however, is shown by the extent to which the respective goal-keepers were in demand, and Callender had a great deal more work than Harford. It may be said that he did more than any other individual of the Palace to win the match. He has always done well against the Town, and it is a mystery that he should ever lose his place from the team unless his games against Luton are out of the ordinary.

TWO GOALS.

The ground appeared to be in splendid condition when the teams turned out, but within half an hour it was badly cut up all down the centre, and as time wore on there was tremendous difficulty in making the ball move through the thick mud. Callender was early in demand, chiefly to deal with centres, but there was more nip in the Palace advances when they began, the left wing being prominent. Harford had to be alert, but Callender had to handle more often, and soon showed that he was not easily to be beaten. Gale was a big factor in dealing with the clever Palace left wing, and Clarke got rattled and resorted to fouls. Three or four corners fell to the Town, but the ball was got away, and then came a speedy thrust by the Palace left wing. Butler pushed the ball through a gap between the backs, and though Kingham made an effort to stop SIMPSON, he was shouldered off, and the centre-forward went through to shoot hard and true past Harford as the goal-keeper came out. After the Palace goal had escaped in the luckiest possible fashion, the Palace right sprinted away, and Harry ran close in to shoot; the ball struck the bar and came out, but a moment later Harry got the ball over well, and BUTLER had the easiest of chances to shoot past Harford.

RENNIE'S PENALTY.

Two goals up in less than half an hour was good going for the visitors, and yet the Town had been the more prominent, without being so convincing in front of goal. Callender saved splendidly a great shot from Rennie after the latter had been tripped on the edge of the penalty area, and then a series of strong assaults by the Town brought the best from Callender and his backs, but the goal had lucky escapes. Eventually, Rennie showed some forcefulness close in when tackling the goal-keeper and Charlton, and would probably have scored had not a defender handled. The referee awarded a penalty kick after consulting a linesman, and RENNIE gave Callender no chance to save the spot-kick. Half time was signalled immediately with the score:—

PALACE 2
TOWN 1

The teams turned round straightway and resumed the struggle. Play was transferred from end to end with great rapidity, considering the obstacle of the mud in the centre of the field. The Palace showed rare mettle, and Harford brought off a grand save from Clarke, and held a brilliant effort from Turner. This quick shooting was the Palace's best point. Gradually the Town began to take a very much larger share in the game, even though they still clung to their close methods. The Palace concentrated on defence. Their half-backs seldom strayed anywhere near the middle line, and the forwards fell to the rear. When they did get possession, however, they rarely failed to send the ball out to the wingers, who caused Harford some anxiety. Now and then Simpson and the inside men would try and force a passage through the middle. Generally, however, the Town were attacking stren-

uously, and as the game wore on the Palace goal had many, many escapes.

PALACE PENNED IN.

It was all to no purpose. Callender cleared time after time, and made many fine saves, two, one from Rennie and one from Bryce, being marvellous efforts. In the last few minutes the Palace goal area was the scene of many thrilling struggles, and two or three times Rennie all but forced a way through, while M'Nestry and Bryce got the ball over nicely. The former, however, usually essayed a shot when a centre would have been to greater advantage. All the halves endeavoured to succeed where the forwards failed, but they had no better luck, and so the final whistle found the Palace defence successful, and the points for Selhurst.

DEFENCE.

I do not think anyone could blame Harford for either goals against him. In the first case he came out when he might have stayed at home with more success; had he stayed at home and been beaten he would have been blamed; had he saved by coming out he would have made a good save. Kingham played splendidly, as usual, and I saw no fault with his work at all, though one or two thought he should have prevented Simpson scoring. If Kingham has a fault it is that he stands too much knocking about without reprisal. Smith held his own very well, kicking and tackling vigorously. McGinnigle has been the subject of reference above. He, too, does not make enough use of his weight; tries to play the ball all the time, when he might legitimately challenge the man. He was inclined to dribble too much, and though he followed his forwards in a way I like, on the sticky mud it often invited trouble to try and dribble. Fraser had a big handful, but acquitted himself well, though he was also dribbling too much, but gave his wing many fine passes. I liked Gale best because he did not hang on too long, was never afraid to use his shoulders, and when his opponents were disposed to mix it he gave as good as he received, and quietened them a lot.

ATTACK.

For individual manipulation, the Town were the equal of the Palace in attack, but did not show the same useful ideas in opening out the game. They continually scraped about in the mud when a swinging pass would have been more effective. Rennie did get out some nice passes, and altogether played well, again showing a disposition to worry the backs, and with any luck he would have scored two or three goals. Yardley fed M'Nestry as much as he fed Bryce, and both wingers were able to beat the opposition fairly often, but M'Nestry should have middled more often. Still, both Armstrong and Yardley, the former in particular, erred in keeping the ball in the middle, though they were skilful enough when they got on a dry patch.

PALACE.

For the Palace, Callender was a great goal-keeper, and his backs played stubbornly. Wilde was a third back rather than a half-back, and the policy paid. Rivers did good work, but Greener found M'Nestry rather more than he could manage. Simpson was a thrustful leader, and his immediate colleagues were clever, while the wingers had plenty of speed, and were able to get to ball across to advantage. They were a fortunate side, nevertheless, and should have been well beaten.

There were over 8,000 spectators.